

County of Maui
Committee on the Status of Women
2011 in Review
submitted by Barbara Potopowitz, Chair
January 2012

In 2011 our committee met ten times and experienced a few transitions. Former Vice Chair Maggie Bruck's term expired and she was honored with an appreciation letter from Mayor Arakawa for her efforts and contributions to the Committee. We welcomed two new members, Susan (Netra) Halperin and Carol Reimann. We bid a farewell to Anna Mayeda and welcomed Leslie Wilkins as the new ex-officio from the state Commission on the Status of Women.

New Staff members joined us in January. Mercedes Neri, Colleen Chang and Gary Murari. Colleen Chang retired in December and we welcomed Michelle Esteban.

We received our annual presentation on the County Code of Ethics and Sunshine Laws from our Corporation Counsel Gary Murai.

In March, Commission members once again took a quiz about the history of women's issues and rights in celebration of Women's History month. A viewpoint on the importance of Pay Equity for women was printed in the Maui News.

With funding from the state Commission on the Status of Women, the Committee re-printed their Stress Cards and Women's Resource Guides for community distribution.

National Women's Health Week was celebrated in May. We collaborated with Audrey Inaba, Child Health Coordinator for the state Department of Health. Commissioner Ornellas was our liaison for this event and organized a Zumba demonstration on the grass in front of the County building.

In September with the overwhelming support of Mayor Arakawa, I escorted four high school students to the International Women's Leadership Conference in Honolulu. Commissioner Cabebe chaired a committee to choose the students. Nine students applied and four were selected. They were Kyra Vila and Donna Paz, Maui High School; Michelle Raba, St. Anthony High School; and Cheyenne Pico, Hana High School. Mayor Arakawa graciously provided the funding.

October brought National Business & Professional Women's Week and we celebrated with the Maui Chapter of the Business and Professional Women's Group. Netra Halperin, Mercedes Neri and I attended their annual dinner.

Also in October, I was invited by the Mayor's office to a dinner with leaders of the Pilipino community to meet with Senator Pio Cayetano of the Philippines to discuss women's issues. Senator Cayetano chairs a Women and Family Committee.

As 2011 came to a close, we invited state Commission Executive Director Sharon Ferguson-Quick to our October meeting where she shared the goals of the state Commission and we reviewed our mission and conducted a mini-strategic planning session. The Committee voted to conduct a survey of the needs of Maui County women in 2012. The Committee heard a presentation from Ross Izumigawa of the County's MIS Division in preparation for this survey.

We look forward to a rewarding and productive 2012.